

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Tim Murphy
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Hearing on “Security of HealthCare.gov”
November 19, 2013**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Americans want to know the answers to two simple questions: Is my information secure if I use HealthCare.gov? And why should I believe the administration that it is?

It has been nearly 50 days since the launch of HealthCare.gov, and the website is still not functioning at an acceptable level. This is despite the numerous promises and assurances the public was given by members of the administration leading up to the launch of the website. This committee heard directly from Secretary Sebelius, Administrator Tavenner, and CCIO Director Gary Cohen that they were ready by October 1. We are all deeply troubled that the individuals who want to be in charge of America's healthcare system could not even predict accurately if the website would work.

And those predications were not just limited to the website. We have also been routinely promised that the website was safe and that Americans personal information would be secure. When Administrator Tavenner last appeared before this committee, she informed us that testing began in October of last year, and that end-to-end testing would be completed by the end of August this year. We have now learned that this was simply not the case. End-to-end testing is not possible when the website isn't completed. Today, we hope to hear from our witness about how much of the website remains to be built. If the first parts of HealthCare.gov have been this problematic, we are obviously concerned about parts that are being constructed under current pressures and time constraints.

The witness for our first panel today is Mr. Henry Chao, the Deputy Chief Information Officer at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. We thank you for testifying today. I can only imagine how stressful the last few months have been. Yet, I hope you can appreciate the fact that HHS has a ways to go to regain the trust of the American people. They were promised a functioning website — as easy as buying “a TV on Amazon” — and they got a train wreck.

The reason the trust of the American people may be so difficult to regain is because every day new revelations emerge that show this train wreck was entirely foreseeable. Last week this subcommittee uncovered emails from CMS showing that as early as July of this year Mr. Chao, our first witness, was worried that the company primarily responsible for building the website — CGI — would crash on takeoff. This subcommittee also released materials showing that as early as April top administration officials were well aware that Healthcare.gov was far off schedule and testing of the website would be limited.

We have also learned that HealthCare.gov was only launched after Administrator Tavenner signed an “Authority to Operate,” which included a memo warning her that a full Security Control Assessment was not completed. This memo makes it clear that the highest levels of CMS knew that there were security risks present. Yet, again, while this document was being signed behind closed doors, in public, administration officials were promising that in only a few days the public would be able to use a perfectly functioning website.

A few weeks ago Secretary Sebelius told this committee that the “highest security standards are in place, and people have every right to expect privacy.” I hope that today we hear what those standards are from not only Mr. Chao, but our second panel as well. Our second panel features some of the contractors that are responsible for the security of HealthCare.gov, and I thank them for testifying today. I am disappointed that one of the companies responsible for security, Verizon, chose not to testify today. We will certainly be following up with Verizon so that they are accountable to the public for their work here.

Today's hearing is not just about the website. Websites can be fixed. What cannot be fixed is the damage that could be done to Americans if their personal data is compromised.

Right now, HealthCare.gov screams to crooks “if you like my healthcare info, you can steal it.”

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